

Douglas County itself where the problem is most severe, the results have been most dramatic. Unfortunately, the results are still not satisfactory. There are those who will today perhaps question the wisdom of this bill. They are going to say that we are getting along fine. They are going to say that it is tough on Douglas County because it is going to cost us so much more money in the court house. But, before you adhere to those arguments I want you to remember this. The welfare costs of the State of Nebraska are borne not only by the citizens of the State of Nebraska but by residents of Douglas County as well. If an individual who owes child support does not pay that child support, then those costs fall inevitably upon welfare. Those costs then come from the pockets of everyone. Many times from people who are less able to support or to pay than the individual who refuses to pay. Only yesterday afternoon after adjournment I spent several hours with individuals who are concerned because they have not been reimbursed for child support for many years. There are many problems that still exist. The out of state problem is a very serious one. But, the most serious problem is the terrible load that we have in many counties. Plus the fact that we have not in some instances, provided the necessary help to those counties to enforce the law. If you will remember a few months back there was a two column story in the World Herald which spoke very glowingly about the efforts of the district courts to collect child support. Spoke in loud terms of how many thousands of dollars have been collected. You would have thought that the idea originated with the district court. The facts are the idea originated right here. If you will recall the first bills that I introduced, and this was way back in about 1971, before some of my good friends present here today were with us, the idea that we would expect an individual to pay the court ordered child support was considered absurd. But I'll tell you what happened. This legislature enacted some laws. An individual who hadn't been paying child support for years suddenly when they were faced with the facts of life that you either paid child support or you might wind up in jail decided that they preferred to pay. Now the results have not been perfect, far from it. I am embarrassed each time some mother asks me why she can't collect her child support. But, I know that we have done a lot. We have done our best. We have not been completely successful, we have made great strides over where we were ten years ago. The facts are that when they say you can't teach an old dog new tricks, there an awful lot of guys paying child support today who never thought that they would pay it. That is the way it ought to be. There are a lot of mothers collecting child support for the help of their children who never thought that they would collect it. That is the way it ought to be. Now, there are going to be arguments about why this won't work. The extra load that it is going to cost, the problems that develop internally, don't care about those problems. It is the responsibility of this legislature to lay down the law to see to it that we protect the citizens of this state and that means all of the citizens. It does not mean only those who are loud in both vociferous and boisterous. It means that we also protect the weak and the illiterate, the young, the unimportant and it means that you protect the children who have no one else to speak for them. Now, if there is a county attorney in the State of Nebraska and I addressed a letter to.... as a result of my conversation with Senator Newell, to the county attorney of Douglas County asking him to explain to me